

CERTAIN
OBSERVATIONS
Vpon

HOSEA
THE SECOND

The 7. & 8. Verses.

As they were delivered at a Friends House
who had broken his leg, for which meeting the
Author was committed to the *White-Lyon* by Sir
Thomas Mordaunt late Judge of Assize for the
County where he remained Prisoner
in *DEBENTHURST*.

By WILLIAM KITTING.

*And he was a very old man, and they were very kind to him, for he had
been a very good man, and he was a very good man, and he was a very good man.*

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been a very good man, and he was a very good man, and he was a very good man.*

LONDON,

Printed by William Lint, in the Strand, in Little Britain, 1643.

THE HISTORY

OF THE

As they were delivered to the hands of the



who had procured


Author was

Thomas

Co.

By WILLIAM KILPATRICK

Printed for William Daines, scilicet
LONDON


To the right worshipfull the Iustices of peace for his
Majesties County of Sarrie, the Author wisberh in-
crease of the knowledge of Iesus Chrlst, together
with all other good things.

Right worsh. it may seeme strange unto you that
such an one as I who have bin judged an offender
should be so bould as to go about to shelter any thing un-
der the shadow of your protection, as it may seeme
both to your selves and others, I now do in aedivating
the insuing matter unto you, but give me leave I beseech
you a little to excuse my bouldnes herein, being indu-
ced hereunto by these considerations.

Because the providence of God so ordered it to
call me before you, to give an accompt of my last
practise in this thing: (namely,) why I should take
upon me to preach having never bin at the Univer-
sities, nor received orders from the Bishops.

To the which question, I answered: that I conceived
I had a warrant for what I did from the Scrip-
ture as (namely.) 1 Pet. 4. 10. where it is said,

A 2

To the Reader

as every man hath received ~~the gift of the Holy Spirit~~ after the same as good Stewards of the manifold graces of God, where it appeareth to be manifest, that as no man in the things of God is to speak ~~above what he knoweth~~, but according to the proportion of Faith, so likewise ought no man to hide any of the things of God which he hath received from God, but seasonably to declare them to the glory of God and edification of others, least he be found in the number of those who hideth his talent in a napkin, and therefore being thus by the providence of God called before you to give a reason of my action, and the hope that is in me, I made bold to present the perusal of what had then bin delivered unto your worship.

The second Reason inducing me hereunto, is because it was the request of some of you before whom I was examined, upon the hearing of the subject that I was upon, that you might see the notes of what was delivered upon it, which I promised to do, and have herein faithfully done it, not adding or detracting any thing from it so farre as possibly I can remember, either in matter or manner, therefore have I made bold in this sort to present it to you.

The third and last reason is, because I apprehended by what I heard from you, that God hath given you in a good measure, knowledge by which you are able

Tractate R. A. 10. 1. 1.

from your persons or places imputed to my weakness
rather then to the least willfulness or disrespect, for
the Lord is my witnesse, I desire to honour both, as like-
wise all men in place of authority, as I am bound by the
word of God to do, and though I am accused and con-
demned for being at a conventicle, truly if praying for
the King and Parliament and edifying one another in
our most holy faith, be keeping conventicles, then I am
guilty: but if a Conventicle be such a meeting as in
the least measure is against any of these, then I detest
it and abhorre it: thus desiring the Lord of mercies to
fill you with the knowledge of himselfe, that you may
be faithfull in your places of trust, by your author-
ity seruant shall remaine

white Lyon.
25. March
1647.
Your worshipps in
command to his
power in the Lord
through a prisoner,
W. KERRIN.
CERTAINE
A

CERTAIN
OBSERVATIONS
UPON
HOSEA
THE SECOND.

HOSEA, 7.8.

Though she follow after her Lovers, she shall not come at them, though she seeke them, yet shall she not find them: then she shall say, I will goe and returne to my first Husband, for then was it better with me then now: for she did not know that I gave her Corne and Wine and Oyle, and multiplied her Silver and Gold, which they prepared for Baal.



HE Lord intending to set forth His owne Majesty and greatnesse together with his love and goodnesse to the world, makes choyce of a People whom in speciall he displayes his Glory before, and makes knowne his love and goodnesse unto: amongst the rest of Gods ends & designs which he had in so doing, this is one, that he makes known

to us, (namely,) that they might declare, and hold forth these excellencies of God to the world, which people were the children of *Israel*, as appears *3. Amos 2.* and that these might excell above others he makes Covenant with their fathers and them, *Gen. 17. 7.* and therefore claimes a special interest in them, expecting more then ordinary things from them, as appeares by *Deut. 14. 1, 2.* where *Moses* tells them, *You are the Children of the Lord your God, for thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen you to be a precious people unto Himselfe; above all the people that are upon the earth, &c.* As if he should say, you are the peculiars of my love, and therefore I would have you be peculiar in your carriage: and that there might be nothing wanting on Gods part to make them compleat herein, he therfore gives his Lawes unto *Jacob*, and his Statues unto *Israel*: not dealing so with any other Nation, *Psal. 147. 19, 20.* but now he having planted this noble vine and expecting fruit proportionable to the meanes; but behold and see how soone they degenerated and fell from God, and followed the inventions of their owne braine, and the suggestion of their owne Spirits. For no sooner was the ten Tribes rent from *Rehoboam*, to *Ieroboam*, but they were rent from the profession of Gods truth, to the following of *Baall*. Which was occasioned by the subtile counsell of *Ieroboam*, who having gotten a Kingdom thought to keepe it by his owne policy, rather then going in a way of truth, for if we look into the Books of the *Kings*, you shall there finde, that that which was the great Master Piece of policy, proved to be the great Master Piece of his misery, and the truth of God herein appearing to be made good, is well specified by the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 7.* the wilddome of the flesh is enmity against God.

But to come as briefly as I can unto the things intended in the words: you shall therefore find after their apostacy
from

from God; the Lord is pleased to walke in a course of meanes towards them: which meanes was the sending of his Prophet amongst them, to discover their evils to them; that so they might be reduced unto their former state and condition: amongst the rest this Prophet *Hosea* was one, who doth in this first, and second *Chapters*, declare unto them their sin; as likewise the threatnings of God against them for that sin, and that he might not bestow labour in vaine, there is therefore (in the 6, and 7. *vers.* of the 2 *Chapter*,) declared the speciall meanes that God tooke which should take effect to reclaime some of them to himselfe, the means is laid downe in the sixt *vers.* and further amplified in the seventh: In the sixt he saith he will stop her way, he will hedge up her path: & wheras it might be objected though they may be stopped & hedged up, yet love will make men leape through hedges and ditch (as we say,) to which *Quest.* is *Answ.* made in the seventh *vers.* *Though she doe follow her Lovers, she shall not come at them*, as if he should say, there shall not be left so much as a probability or possibility of meanes to come at them, so that in this seventh *vers.* wee may observe these foure things.

1. The strength of these Peoples spirits in cleaving to affect her Lovers, expressed in these words, *following after them and seeking them.*

2. The meanes which the Lord here useth to reclaime her from them, expressed in these words, *though she do seeke after them, yet she shall not find them.* she shall be disappointed of her ends herein.

3. The effect that this meanes wrought (by the blessing of God upon it) expressed in these words, *then she shall say, I will returne to my first Husband &c.*

4. Here is laid a maine motive or consideration that wrought upon her spirit expressed in the latter clause of the *vers.* *for then (saith she) it was better with me then now.*

From the former part of the words we may observe thus much, namely, that there is an aptnesse of spirit even in men professing religion, which are in the visible Church of God, to forsake God, to follow other lovers, other Gods: this we shall see plainly proved to us, if we do but a little examine the *Scriptures*. 2 *Jere.* 13. The Lord there complains, my People have committed two evils, they have forsaken Me the Fountaine of living *Waters*, to dig them pits, even broken pits that will hold no water; Wee see here those that God owned for his People, even these forsake him; But before we farther prove it, some may object and say, but what is it to forsake God, or how & when may men be said to forsake God? *Ans.* That usually in Scripture men are said to forsake God when they forsake the law of God, the *Commandments* of God, or the worship of God, and therefore saith the Lord to *Moses*, *Deut.* 31. 6. This People will rise up, and go a whoring after the Gods of a strange *Land*, and will forsake me and break my *Covenant* which I have made with them, as if he should say, by breaking my *Covenant* they forsake me: and so in the 24. *Iosua*, 20. 10 *Judg.* 10. 10 13. 1 *Sam.* 8. 8. 2 *Chro.* 13. 11. all which *Scriptures* prove that a People in outward *Covenant* with God have forsaken God, and that then they are said to forsake God, when they forsake the worship of God.

Now I come to the reasons how it comes to passe that such an aptnes of Spirit doth appeare.

1, *Rea.* Because the termes which other Gods propound are more sutable unto mens carnall reasonings then the termes propounded by the Lord, therefore in the 23. *Ezek.* 5. And *Abolah* plaid the *Harlot* when she was mine, and she was set on fire with her lovers, the reason is given in *vers.* 6. which were clothed with blew silke, and so indeed that honour and prelerment which is held unto men, by the hand

hand of the *whore*, as a Cup of Gold, drawes all men, high, and low, rich and poore, to commit spirituall fornication with her, whereas the termes which the God of Heaven tenders to men (if they will follow him) is that they must suffer for his name sake, and that *Foxes* have holes, and *Birds* of the *Ayre* have nests, but the *Son* of man hath not whereon to lay his head, the consideration of which termes, makes men many times turne off the profession of *Iesus Christ*: when tribulation or afflictions comes, men are offended, *Math* 13. 1.

2. *Rea.* Because men have more conversments with other Gods, the hearts of men naturally have more commerce with the world and sin, and so with the worship set up by the men of the world, rather then with God and the things of God: and certainly where a mans thoughts is most pitched, there is his love and delight, for where the treasure is there will the heart be, and therefore saith the Apostle, *Demas* hath forsaken us and imbraced this present world, as if the Apostle should say, he hath considered things beforehand concerning the world and hath found by his conversments with it, that the world is good, and therefore now he hath imbraced this present world, he hath given up the strength of his heart and affections to it, as on the contrary, when the soule begins to have his thoughts pitched upon God, and hath his spirit raised up, to behold the lovely nesse and glory, fulnesse, and excellency, that is in *Iesus Christ*, the soule upon these considerations closeth with *Christ*, imbraceth *Christ* and saith concerning him, as the Church saith in the like case concerning *Christ*, *1 Cant.* 12. a bundle of myrrh is my well Belov'd to me he shall lye all night betwene my breasts: Oh saith the soule, *Christ* shall have the chiefest seate of residence in my heart, and his lawes shall beare sway in my life: what though I am imprisoned, reproached, disgraced, counted a seditious person, one

that troubleth the State, yet this is no trouble at all unto such a heart, for he looks up to *Christ*, desiring with him to indure the *Crosse*, and despise the shame: but on the contrary mens hearts being set upon the creature, & their desires being set upon excellencies here, reject the excellency of *Iesus Christ*, and the profession of his truth.

3. *Rea.* And last, why men in an externall Covenant with God, those that God ownes as his, may fall back & degenerate, is because that men may, and (they which have more in them then men, even the Saints of God themselves) doe neglect their spirituall watch, they suffer their spirits to wander, and then its no marvell that he who wanders up & downe the whole earth seeking whom he may devour doth meet with this wandring spirit, and turne it out of the way, and so we see *Dauids* eye was wandering upon *Bathsheba* & *Sathan* soon caught him in a snare, as you may see in 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. 4. these with many other reasons might be laid downe, for the confirmation of this truth, but I judge these may suffice.

The second thing observable from the words, is the meane it selfe used by God to reduce them to their former state laid downe in these words, *though shee seeke after her Lovers she shall not come at them*, as if he should say, I will take a sure course with them to reclaime them to my selfe, though she do goe a whoring after her Lovers and followes other Gods and loveth so to doe, *she shall not find them*, that is, she shall find no content, nor satisfaction in them as formerly she hath done: from whence we may observe, That when God intends to do any soules good, either to reclaime them from a fallen condition, or to bring persons to the knowledge of himselfe, the usuall way that he takes herein is to discover to them the emptinesse and insufficiency of all things that is here below; as not being able to give any content, or satisfaction to the soule; there is something of this truth (me thinks) appearing in the 14.

vers. of this Chapter, where the Lord saith, *I will bring her into the wilderness*, now we know a *wildernes* condition is a condition destitute of all helpe, nothing is to be found therein but wild Beasts ready to devoure, no help is to be expected in the *wildernes* from it; so indeed when men are brought into a *wildernes* condition having neither penny nor pennies worth as the Prophet saith, *Eesai. 55. 1. Then is God pleased to speake comfort to his People and then doth he cause them to look upwards*: but for fuller proof, *3 Iere. 23.* see there the ground of their returne to God, truly (say they) *the hope of hils is but vaine, nor the multitude of mountaines, what then but in the Lord our God is the health of ISRAEL*; when they were brought to see the strength of all things to help them was but weaknes, then they cry, *in the Lord our God is the health of Israel.* So in *1 Eccles. 1. 2.* Solomon after his setting his heart to find out content in the creature and after his following other Gods and forsaking the Lord who had appeared twice unto him, you shall find upon his returne this is the accompt that he leaves behind him, *all in vanity and vexation of spirit*, & the reason why God takes such a course with men is, because while the soule sees any fullnesse in any thing in heaven or earth whereby to leane to besides *Christ*, it will fasten at the hornes of that *Altar*, be it what it will, and never make any further search or inquiry after *Christ*, the cariage of the soule in this case is like the cariage of *Jacob* in an other, for while ther was corne in *Canaan*, *Jacob* never thinks nor mentions going into *Egypt*, but when there was none there, then saith old *Jacob*, *Gene. 42. 2. why gaze ye one upon another, seeing there is Corne in Egypt?* so indeed while there is any food to be got for the soule here below it looks no higher, and therefore it is, that the Lord is pleased to cut off all springs of comfort and peace to be had from any thing here below, that so the soule may see *Iesus Christ* to be he who has all the Well-
springs

spring of comfort, and peace, and joy, and refreshment to the soule. *Let us a little from the consideration of this Doctrine examine our spirits, and see how our hearts stand affected, or what our Spirits is fraught with, whether with high conceits of the world, of the excellency and fulnes and glory of it? Or whether with the excellent fullnes & goodnesse that is in Iesus Christ? certainly this is an undoubted truth, that if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in them, let them professe what they will, therefore it behoves every man to looke about him, and see whether God hath ever yet made this discovery to the soule, namely, that all the things of the world is empty and poore, & weak, not able to give out the least dram of true comfort to the soule; I beseech you lets againe aske our hearts this question, as Christ did in the like case: are we able to drink of the Cup that Christ hath drunk of? And to be baptized with the Baptisme that Christ is baptised with?*

We do not know what employment Christ may put us upon: certaine it is, that that heart which is in the last ingaged to the world, will never doe any great matters for Iesus Christ, he will play fast and loose with Christ; this we all professe to know, that we cannot serve two Masters, God & Mammon, their commandare so opposite one to each other as that if we obey the one, we must reject the other, wherefore let us commune with our owne hearts, and see a little how our spirits stand affected to Christ: do we find upon serious examination, that Christ and his law doth beare sway in our hearts, & that excellency that is in them doth in the eyes of our soules weigh downe all that riches and honours and pleasures and preferments of the world? nay more then this, do you see so much excellency in Gods wayes as that it will beare your charges with

great allowance through those miseries and sorrowes, reproaches and losses that you shall sustaine in this life, yea even life it selfe, we shall see) *Paul* when he cast up his account of matters of this nature, he triumphs in that glorious allowance that he saw provided for him by God, 2 Cor. 4. 1. saith he, *our light afflictions which are but for a moment they worke for us a farre more excellent eternall weight of glory*: wherefore let us not rest satisfied with a face of profession, but let us labour to make inquiry into our owne heart and see what discoveries God hath made to us of the creatures emptinesse, and his owne fulnesse.

2. *Use*. We may from the Doct. delivered see the reason why the Lord many times is pleased to strip his owne people naked of creature comforts, It is that so the Lord may discover to his people, the emptines, the sittingnes of the, that so they may see more fulnes, yea even all fulnesse in himselfe: and therefore though the world misconster Gods meanings to his *Saints* in his carriages towards them in the passages of his providence, in saying they are poore and meane and the off-scouring of the world, and God regards them not; let not the servants of God misconster his meaning too, this will but aggravate their sorrow, but let us see what the Scripture saith, and consult with it 2 James 5. *Harken my beloved brethren; hath not God chosen the poore of this world, rich in Faith and heires of the Kingdom?* This is a thing worthy of serious attention, that God should chuse poore nothings of this world to be rich in faith and heires of the Kingdom: and this is most usually found, that the meaner the *Saints* conditions are in the world, the fuller and richer are they in faith, and in Communion with *Iesus Christ*; and therefore if God be pleased to take away Wife or Children, or friends, or liberty, or estate, if God

be pleased to take away any of these from us and to empty us of these, we should labour to make that use of it which the Lord expects we should (namely) to see more fullnesse in him from whom we have all our mercies.

The third thing laid downe in the words, is the fruit or effect that the *meanes wrought upon her*, expressed in these words, *then shall she say, I will go and returne to my first Hus- hand*: where we may take notice under what consideration she returnes home to God, and that is here declared under the consideration of a husband; she doth not say, I will returne to my *Saviour*, and so expect salvation from him, but *to my husband*, to him, to whom I desire to yeeld subjection and obedience as a loving spouse ought to doe, from whence we may observe thus much:

That *Iesus Christ* is the onely head and husband, *Lord & Law-giver* of his Church and People: for proof of which let us examine the Scriptures, *1 Ephe. 22, 23. and gave him so to be the head of all things, to his Church which is his body, the fullnesse of him that filleth all in all*, that fullnesse the body hath it hath from the head, *4 Ephe. 13, 16.* where the Apostle exhorts them, that they would not be tossed up and downe with every wind of Doctrine by the flights of men that lye in waite to deceive, and that they might prevent this evil the layes downe a meanes in these 15. & 16. verses. *but speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things which is the head even Christ, from whom all the body fully joy- ned together, and compassed by that which every joyn supplieth according to the effectuall working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying it selfe in love, 5. Ephe. 23. Christ is the head of the Church, and the Saviour of his body: and so in the 1 Col. 18. & 33. Esa. 22.*

Now for the reasons how it comes to passe that *Iesus Christ*

Christ is the only head and husband, Lord and Law-giver of his Church.

1. *Rea.* Because the Church of *Christ* is sprung up from the loynes of *Christ*, they have beene taken out of the very sides of *Christ*: for alas this we are all to know, that though we were glorious in the loynes of our first Parents in the day of our creation; though God made man righteous, yet he sought out many inventions: *Ecclesi* 7. 29. The creature man soone lost his glory and became vile and miserable, and so had continued, had not *Iesus Christ* stept betweene the misery of the Creature and the wrath of his Father; and by his owne blood made up that great breach which sinne had made betweene the creature man, and the great Creator the Lord of Heaven and Earth: had it not bin for *Christ*, there had not so much as the name of a Church of God bin heard of upon the face of the Earth: therefore as *Adam* claimes propriety in *Hevab* because she proceeded from his side, saying, *this now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, She shall therefore be called woman*; So may *Iesus Christ* claime a propriety and interest in the Church to be Lord and husband of it, because it proceeds from his very, loynes his very sides.

2. *Rea.* Because *Iesus Christ* hath bought his Church, they are the travell of his soule, the glory of his Mediator-ship, are there not all the reasons that possibly can be, seeing *Iesus Christ* hath travelled for his Church, & by his travels brought forth a glorious deliverance to his Church that now his Church should be subject to him; and yeeld obedience to his lawes: seeing *Christ* hath satisfied God his Father by his owne blood, is it not reason that we should live to his praise and honour? is it reason that when a mother hath undergone sore travell and pain with

a Child, and at last when the Child is through many difficulties and hazards of the Womans life, brought forth, that another Woman that stands by, when the Child is delivered, should snatch it up and say, this Child shall be subject unto me and owne me for its mother, and what I command it so it shall doe, and what I command it to weare it shall weare, would not this be compted injurious dealing with this poore Woman that hath suffered so much in bringing it forth, that now she should be deprived of the comfort of bringing it up, and is it not as injurious dealing with *Iesus Christ*, that seeing he hath travelled for his Church, and brought forth his Church, that now other men should arrest it of his hands and prescribe lawes to them, which they would sette their consciences to be subject to, and therefore by way of use, in the first place this serves to reprove all these persons that so doe: certainly *Iesus Christ* will one day be even with all those persons: sure it is, that the Church being the glory of his Mediatorship, he will not give his glory to any other, nor his praise to graven Images, but though in our now labour to dis-throne *Christ*, yet there is a time coming wherein *Iesus Christ* will dis-throne all his enemies and will triumph gloriously in the despite of them all, he will make his enemies his footstool, he means sine of the House of the Lord shall be established in the tops of the mountains: therefore let all men for the time to come take heed how they prescribe any lawes for the government of the Church, that they step not up in *Christs* stead: but this let all men know, that *Christ* hath prescribed lawes already which are perfect and pure, by which he both hath, and doth, and will govern his Church, and therefore let this be the duty of us all, to labour to know what these lawes and rules are, that

so we may be more and more subject unto them, that wee dishonour not *Iesus Christ*, by giving any thing to any other, which is only of right due unto him.

2. *Use*. If it be so that *Christ* is the head and husband of his Church and people, then in the next place we may take notice of the wonderfull and singular love of *Iesus Christ* towards a poore company of creatures; that *Christ* should stand under such a neere relation to them as a husband, there is no reason can be given, in respect of us why *Christ* should do it, we may find reason enough in our selves why *Christ* should loath us, condemne us, reject us; but that he should love us, stand as a husband to us, wee must seek a reason of this elsewhere then from our selves: and truly the Scripture doth declare the reason fully to us in the 2 *Hos.* 19. *I will marry thee to my selfe in mercy and compassion*, it has bin the meere mercies and compassions of *Iesus Christ* working in his owne brest hath brought this great and mighty worke to passe: and truly the serious consideration of this thing were it well weighed by us, it would cause us to be willing to be any thing, to doe any thing, yea to suffer any thing for him, who hath bin and done and suffered so much for us.

3. *Use*, exhorts all of us, that seeing *Iesus Christ* is the head of his Church, &c. we should from hence be exhorted to yeeld subjection to *Iesus Christ* and his laws in all things.

And first of all, our subjection to *Christ* must be free subjection.

Secondly, it must be Universal subjection.

Thirdly, it must be perpetuall subjection.

1. Our subjection to *Christ* and his lawes must be free, that is, it must be raised within us from the consideration of that excellency that is in *Christ* and his lawes, and from

no by-end whatsoever, this was *Dauids* frame 119. *Psal.* 94. saith he there, *I am shine, save mee, for I seeke thy Precepts:* as if he should say, I seeke them meereley for that excellency that I see in them: many may outwardly be subject to *Christ*, but yet not under this consideration, but as *Christ* saith, 6. *John* yee seeke me for the Loaves: so may *Christ* say to many, you seeke mee, you yeeld outward subjection to mee, not freely from that excellency that is in me, but for your owne by-ends and respects, but wee must know that that subjection which *Christ* calls for must be free.

Secondly, it must be Universall, *Christ* calls for all: 12. *Mark* 33. *thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soule, and might, and strength,* and saith the Apostle, *you are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your bodies and in your Spirits, which are Gods.*

Thirdly, it must be perpetuall, *Christ* cannot iadure that any should deale deceitfully with him, but we must prove constant unto him what ever it cost us, 2 *Rev.* 10. *be faithfull to death,* and in 1 *Luke*, 74, 75. *Christ* expects that his people should serve him in holinesse and righteousness all the dayes of our lives. Not a little season for a spire, but constantly, and if we do but a little cast our eye upon *Christ*, wee shall see that which may ingage us hereunto: as 1 *Christ*s love was a free love; secondly, it was a full love, and thirdly, it is a durable love, whom he loves once he loves to the end; And therefore we should be ingaged freely and universally and constantly to submit to *Iesus Christ*.

4. *Vse*, Is for consolation to the servants of God that have given up themselves to be swayed by the Scepter of *Christ*, I say consolation in divers particulars: as first if *Christ* be thy husband, then be comforted in this, that he will provide for thee, 34. *Psal.* 10. *the Lyons shall lack and suffer*

for hunger, but those that feare the Lord shall lack no good thing,
 54. Esa. 41. 5. feare not for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither shalt
 thou be confounded; for he that made thee is thy husband, whose
 name is the Lord of Hosts.

Secondly, Wee may expect a provision from Christ, so
 protection from Christ, he will certainly protect his people, 33.
 Deut. 3. all thy Sais are in my hand, he will either keep his
 people from trouble, or support them in trouble, 43. Esa. 2.
 when thou passest through the water I will be with thee, & through
 the fire it shall not burn thee: the servants of God, in all their
 troubles & sorrowes which they undergo for his name sake,
 go no farther then Iesus Christ himselfe goes along with them,
 63. Esa. 10. in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angell
 of his presence saved them.

Thirdly, as we may expect provision and protection
 from Christ, so preservation also, 13. Heb. 5. I will never leave
 thee nor forsake thee, it is not any thing that men or Devils
 can do that can any way by any of their subtelties or per-
 secutions separate Iesus Christ from the soule, but as Christ
 saith, because I live you shall live also, and therefore when
 there was but such a conception raised in the heart of the
 Church, 49. Esa. 14. SYON saith, the Lord hath forsaken
 mee, and my God hath forgotten mee: see what answer the Lord
 there makes, vers. 15, 16. Can a woman forget her child? though
 she may, yet will not I forget thee, behold I have ingraven thee up-
 on the palmes of my hands; thy walls are ever in my sight. As if
 he should say, it's as possible for men to pull away my
 strength from my selfe, as to pull away my people from me
 which seemes to be held out in these words, I have ingra-
 ven thee upon the Palmes of my hands: now that
 which is ingraven in a mans hands, is as it were made one
 with the hand: you may as well pull away the part of the
 hand

hand as the ingraven in the hand, so indeed so deeply are the People of God interested into that great attribute of Gods strength, that men and Devills may as soone pull God out of Heaven as the Saints out of Gods hands.

The fourth thing observable in the words, and that is the motive by which she is provoked to return to her first husband, laid downe in these words, *for it was better with me then now*; the consideration of that goodnesse that formerly she had found in Gods waies, did mightily provoke her to returne againe: from whence we may observe thus much.

That it is ever best with the servants of God & Churches of Christ when they keepe closest to God.

What it is to keepe close to God we have already shewed, that to keepe close to God is to keepe close to the Law of God, the Commandements of God: now that it is best both with persons & Churches, when they so do, will appeare by the Scripture, 2. Jer. 2. saith the Lord there, *go and cry in the eares of Jerusalem saying, thus saith the Lord, I remember thee with the kindnesse of thy youth, and the Love of thy espousalls when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a Land that was not sown, what then did they lose any thing by it? no certainly, in vers. 3. Israel was a thing hallowed to the Lord and his first fruits, all they that eat it shall offend: evil shall come upon them; saith the Lord;* we see God takes speciall notice of it, and tells them, *Israel was a thing hallowed to the Lord, God himselfe sets them apart as People excellent in his eye, and so did he esteeme of them, that men had better have taken a Bear by the teeth (as we say) then to have meddled with them, evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord, 19. Exod. 5. see what the Lord there saith, now therefore if you obey my wayes indeed, and keepe my Covenant,*
then

then you shall be my chiefe treasure above all people, though all the earth be mine, and yet shall be to me a Kingdom of Priests; and an holy Nation, &c. thote that God owne as his chiefe treasure, are such as obey his voice; and keepe his Covenant, 7. Jer. 23. *this thing commanded I them saying, obey my voice, and I will be your God, and yee shall be my people, and walke in all the wayes which I have commanded you, that it may be well with you, it is and hath bin well with the Saints, when they have closely walked in the wayes of God, so 11. Jeremi, 4. &c.*

1. Rea. Why its best with the servants of God when they cleave closest to him, is because those who so do, are kept by God from that disaster of sorrow, and shame, and confusion that sealesh upon others who forsake him, therefore saith David, 119. Psal. 4. *then shall I not be confounded, when I have respect to all thy Commandements; whereas in 99. Psal. 7. confounded be all those that worship graven Images &c in 3. Jer. 2. We lie in our confusion, and our shame covereth us; (the reason is given,) for we have sinned against the Lord our God, even to this day; and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God. Its sinne that brings shame and confusion of face, but when the soule walks closely with its God, it shall be sure to be kept from shame, for what is it that makes men ashamed, and confounded? it is when they are frustrated of their hopes, of their expectations, of what they thought to enjoy in the way wherein they walked; but now the servants of God shall be sure never to be frustrated of their hopes, for what they expect from any promise of God made by God unto them, they shall be sure it will be performed in its season: its true, there be many things which are imposed upon them by men, as reproaches and scoffes and imprisonments &c. Which they thinke is matter of*

shame, but even these things are looked upon by the *Scs.* as matter of honour and joy, 5. *Act.* 41. *they went away rejoycing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer any thing for his name sake.*

2. *Rea.* Is because those that keepe closest to the commands of God, are most honoured by God, and it must needs be well with those whom the Lord will honour, these are they whom God will imploy in his speciall service, being made vessels of honour fit for every good worke, for those which walke closest to God in the doing of his will, are those whom God most usually imp'oyes in that most honourable service of suffering for his name sake, and you shall alwaies find (since the comming of *Christ* in the flesh) that those Churches and persons that have most shined in a way of Innocency and holynesse towards God, have bin most lyable to persecutions, and afflictions from men; you shall see that Church of *Smyrna*, which *Christ* hat nothing against, (2. *Rev.* 9, 10.) was that Church which of all the rest had suffered, and was like to suffer most for his name sake: and therefore as faith is the gift of God, (wherin those who have it bestowed upon them excell other men,) so suffering for *Christ* is as well an excellent gift of God, given as a speciall favour to some of the Saints, 1. *Phil.* 29. by which they walke as it were upon a higher ground above their brethren, having the spirit of glory and of God resting upon them, 1. *Pet.* 4. 14. and so in 3 *Rev.* 4. thou hast a few names in *Sardi*, which have not defiled their garments: and did they lose any thing by cleaving to God; by keeping their garments undefiled? No saith God, these are they that I owne, these shall walke before me in white, for they are worthy.

And therefore though this may be a reason which may
seeme

seeme to beat off some from the profession of *Christ*, yet it should rather ingage the Saints to follow *Christ*, and to keepe close to his wayes, as knowing, that those that honour God, he will honour them: and wherein can men honour God more then by a close walking in a conformity to his will?

3. *Rea.* Why its best with the Saints when they cleave to the Lord, is because that those who so do, are not only kept from shame and confusion, but likewise they are kept from those distracting feares that are ready to lay hold on persons of all sorts in times of danger, and therefore saith *David*, *I will not be afraid of evill tidings*, and what was the reason of it? he gives it himselfe, *because, (saith he) my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord*: Its like if *Dauids* heart had bin wandering any where else, then he would quickly have feared evill tidings; but he now (having his heart cleaving to God) feareth them not; and in the 23. *Psal.* 3, 4. *he restoreth my soule, and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness: yea though I walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no evill, for thou art with me*; Mark I pray, when once *David* was brought to walke in the paths of righteousness, then (saith he) though I walke even in the valley of the shadow of death, I will not feare, as if he should say, though my life be as neere taking away from me, as the shadow of a man is to a man, yet I will not feare, for I walking in the paths of righteousness know, that thou art with me. And truly it is no small priviledge, (especially in times of feares) to be kept, and secured from feares, for many times the consequences that feares produce upon a person, brings more dangerous events along with it, then if the very thing feared had come upon them, and more is required to keepe a man from the feare of danger, then from the danger it self,

as for instance, a little apparell will keepe a man from nakednesse, when a great deale both of money and apparell will not keepe him from the feare of nakednes, and therefore it yet would be kept in times of trouble from overflowing feares of trouble, then keep close to God: for in so doing you will see so much fullnesse of strength, and mercy and love in God, as will swallow up all other inordinate feares.

1. *Vse.* If it be so, that it is best with the servants of God whē they keep closest to him, let us then who professe the name of *Christ*, and appeare to be in the number of those who are made nigh unto God by the blood of *Christ*, let us be exhorted therefore to take heed of back-sliding, and let us labour to know that first it is an easie thing to backslide, if we consider the many provocations hereunto by reason of the deceitfullnesse of our owne hearts: and the snares of the world, with the subtileries of *Sathan*.

And secondly, it is a dangerous thing to back slide, if wee do but consider,

1. From whom we back slide, namely *God*, who is the fountaine of life and the giver of all mercies.

Secondly, To what we back slide, namely, to that which is not able to releive us, nor helpe us in any miserie or strait that we fall into.

Thirdly, If we consider what the cariages of God hath bin, and is to back-sliders, you shall see its dangerous, he shall be filled with his owne wayes, (saith *Solomon*) and if any one draw back, my soule shall have no pleasure in him, (saith *God*) 10. *Hebr.* 38. we shall therefore for the preventing of this grearevill, lay downe some signes of a soule declining from God.

And secondly, we shall lay downe some meanes of prevention.

The

The signes of declining are these, first a disregarding of the truth of *Christ*, 2. *Chron.* 24. 20. when the minds of men, grow weary of the truths of *Christ*, and their estimations of truth, (which formerly hath bin) slackens, it's one shrew'd signe of declining.

A second signe is, when men begin to grow distrustfull of God, and his truth, when many things which God hath said in his word seemes harsh to mens spirits, they cannot well relish it, as they in the 6. *Iohn* 60. when the sayings of *Christ* began to be hard and harsh to them, then they draw back, *vers.* 66.

A third signe is, unfruitfulnesse under the meanes and mercies which God bestowes 13. *Luk.* 7. when men shall rather turne the truth of God which they have received, into notions; and please themselves more with talking of truth then of practising what they know, then it is a signe that truth is bidding them farewell, and they it.

The fourth signe is love of the world, when mens spirits begin to hanker after the world or the honour thereof, they will soone loose *Christ* and his truth, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. the love of money is the root of all evill, which while some have coveted after they have erred from the faith, and therefore from love to *Christ*, he that loves the world had rather loose *Iesus Christ* then the world, and it must needs be so, because he loves it.

Fiftly, and lastly, another signe is spirituall pride, effe-
confidence. For before delirium in his heart is haughty: when a man is proud of that which is not his owne, its no marvell if he soone prove a spirituall bankrupt, therefore I beseech you, let us looke to our selves, & if any man thinke he stand, let him take heed lest he fall. Therefore to prevent it let us consider of some meanes.

First,

First, let us labour for soundnesse of judgement in the truths of God, that so we may receive nothing upon other mens judgements, and reports, but *trying all things wee may hold fast that which is good*, for ignorance is the mother of error, and a corrupted life doth soone follow an erroneous judgement, wherefore let us be often in searching the *Scripture* and seeking of God by Prayer, that he would be pleased to unfold those glorious mysteries of his will in his word unto us by his spirit, that so we may be able to judge of things that differ.

Secondly, let us labour to receive the truth in the love of it, for when truth is received by men under this consideration of love, when men see an excellency in truth and love, the truth from that excellency that they see in it, they will labour for it: you know it's the property of love to do much, and suffer much: and yet it looks upon all that it doth; and suffers as little, because where true love is, it will produce effects, suitable to it self, see this in that love of God, 3. *Job. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* marke, if once God cast an eye of love upon the creature, this very love will produce an effect suitable to its nature, even the giving of *Iesus Christ* to dye for the creature: so indeed if once the love of our soules be given up to the excellency of the truth, then our lives, our liberties, our estates, or friends, will follow roundly, but if there be a defect in our love to the truth, there will soone be a defect in our standing to, or suffering for truth.

The third *meanes*, let us consider that the truth of God is the portion of the *Saints*, if we loose truth we loose *Iesus Christ*, where will you have comfort, and where will you have salvation, if you loose truth? And therefore saith *Salomon*, *Prov. 4. 13. keepe her, for she is thy life*, and therefore *David* hath recourse upon all occasions to the word-

119. *Psal. 49, 50. Remember thy word made to thy Servant, (why) is my comfort in my trouble: as if he should say, I have no other companion in my troubles but it; and so in the 92. vers. of the same Psalm, saith he, except thy law had bin my delight, I should utterly have perished in mine afflictions. And therefore as worldly men compt themselves with all they have by what they have & are in the world, so let the servants of God compt themselves with what they have, & are, by nothing, but what they have in *Jesus Christ*, who dwells in the truth, & conveyes himself through the truth into the hearts and consciences of his People, and therefore let us labour to compell it out portion, and if *Naboth* would rather incur the displeasure of the King, then part with the inheritance given him by his fathers, *1 Kings 21. 35. 4.* how much more should wee be willing to incur the displeasure of all men, rather then to loose any part of the truth of *Jesus Christ* given unto us, and purchased for us, at so deere a rate as his owne precious blood.*

Now we should come to the next words, expressed in this 8th. vers. now she did not know that I gave her *Corne and Wine and Oyle, and multiplied her Silver and Gold, which they have bestowed upon Bael.*

These words seemes to be a maine reason here given by God of this peoples declining from him, and that is laide downe in the generall to be the not taking notice nor observing the mercies and favours of God given unto her.

In which words foure things are to be considered.

First, the mercies themselves laide downe in these words, *Corne and wine and Oyle, &c.*

Secondly, the author of these mercies, under the terme *I gave them*, that is, *God.*

Thirdly, the persons to whom these mercies were given; they were the Children of *Israel.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, the carriage of this people towards God, in the enjoyment of these mercies, and that is here declared.

First, they tooke no notice of them; from what hand they came, expressed in these words, *now she did not know that I gave her Corne, &c.*

Secondly, in spending them, it should seeme she taking no notice from whom the mercies came, takes as little notice or care how they go, which appears in these words, *which they have spent upon Baal*: the words being thus considered, we may observe divers things from them, for our instruction and comfort.

1. *Obs.* That God is the only giver of every mercy and favour that the creature doth enjoy.

2. *Obs.* That it is the duty of the Saints to take speciall notice of the mercies and favours which God gives them.

3. *Obs.* That the not taking notice of mercy and favours of God, is a speciall meanes to occasion men to depart from God.

As concerning the 1. *Observ.* that God is the only giver of every mercy and favour wee enjoy.

I conceive none will deny the truth of it, because it is both a dommon truth, and that which all generally will acknowledge, *James 1. 17.* every good and every perfect gift is from above & comes down from the father of lights, and therefore the consideration of this truth should teach all of us to take notice of the mercy of God, in all the good things we enjoy, to behold God in all the passages of his providence to us, that so if we have any riches, any honours, any friends, any grace, any gifts, all come from God. And therefore we should take heed of sacrificing any thing to our owne nets, but as all mercies we receive come from God, so we must give the glory of all onely

to

to him, who is only worthy of all honour and glory, and praise for ever.

These being the Observations, and this the substance of all the matter which God was pleased to helpe me to deliver, herel was apprehended as I am publicly called by any forth to suffer for them, so I am not unwilling being requested to declare them to all, to such, and unto any it pleaseth God by his good providence to dispose of them, desiring that all persons would try all things, and hold fast that which is good. 1 Th. 5. 21.

I am not ashamed of the Gospell of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation, to everyone that believeth, 1. Rom. 16.

Be not then ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of mee his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the affliction of the Gospell, 2. Tim. 1. 8.

FIN IS.
